



SACHI A. HAMAI  
Interim Chief Executive Officer

## County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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February 6, 2015

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Sachi A. Hamai  
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors  
HILDA L. SOLIS  
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
Second District

SHEILA KUEHL  
Third District

DON KNABE  
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

### SACRAMENTO UPDATE

#### Executive Summary

This memorandum contains a report on the following:

- **Pursuit of County Position to Support SB 23 (Mitchell).** This measure would repeal the provision under current law relating to the CalWORKs Program Maximum Family Grant rule effective January 1, 2016, and prohibit an applicant or recipient of CalWORKs benefits from being denied aid or an increase in the Maximum Aid Payment for a child born into a family during a period in which the family received CalWORKs benefits, among other provisions. Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to support proposals to repeal the CalWORKs Maximum Family Grant rule which prohibits a grant increase for any child born into a family receiving CalWORKs Program aid for ten continuous months prior to the birth of a child, **the Sacramento advocates will support SB 23.**

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#### Pursuit of County Position on Legislation

**SB 23 (Mitchell)**, which as introduced on December 1, 2014, would repeal the provision under current law relating to the CalWORKs Program Maximum Family Grant (MFG) rule effective January 1, 2016, and prohibit an applicant or recipient of CalWORKs

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benefits from being denied aid or an increase in the Maximum Aid Payment for a child born into a family during a period in which the family received CalWORKs benefits, among other provisions.

Existing law establishes guidelines for determining a family's Maximum Aid Payment (MAP) under the CalWORKs Program, including all eligible family members, and the level of aid to be paid. The MFG rule prohibits an increase in CalWORKs aid based on an increase in the number of needy persons in a family due to the birth of an additional child, if the family received aid continuously for the ten months prior to the birth of a child. Current law exempts specified circumstances from this prohibition, including: 1) any child conceived as a result of an act of rape if the rape was reported to a law enforcement agency, medical or mental professional or social services agency prior to or within three months after the birth of the child; 2) if the family does not receive aid for two consecutive months during the ten months prior to the child's birth; and 3) if a family member returns to aid after a break of two or more years during which the family did not receive any aid provided that the family still meets eligibility requirements and aided children are still under 18 years old.

Furthermore, pursuant to the *McCormick vs. County of Alameda* decision, your Board approved policy on September 2, 2014 extending General Relief (GR) assistance and amending County Code Ordinance to provide eligibility for GR to minor children ineligible for CalWORKs benefits due to the MFG rule as follows: 1) GR eligible MFG children who are a part of an approved CalWORKs case in which the family is receiving a zero dollar CalWORKs grant for reasons other than failure to comply with CalWORKs Program requirements, or 2) MFG children whose CalWORKs case was terminated prior to the GR application and the family was receiving a zero dollar CalWORKs grant for reasons other than failure to comply with CalWORKs requirements. The maximum GR cash benefit an MFG child can receive is \$221 per month for the 24 consecutive-month period that it takes for the MFG child to become eligible for the CalWORKs cash benefit. Once a child's MFG status expires, GR aid is terminated and the assistance unit is eligible to apply for CalWORKs cash benefits.

Specifically, SB 23 would: 1) prohibit the denial of aid or an increase in the maximum aid payment if a child was born into an applicant's or recipient's family while receiving aid under the CalWORKs Program; 2) specify that an applicant or recipient of CalWORKs benefits is not entitled to an increased benefit payment for any month prior to January 1, 2016, as a result of the repeal of the MFG rule; and 3) prohibit an applicant's or recipient's eligibility for CalWORKs aid to be conditioned on the disclosure of information regarding rape, incest, or contraception as specified.

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The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) indicates that SB 23 would allow basic assistance for children in families with existing CalWORKs cases and families who apply for CalWORKs in the future by alleviating a degree of the financial impact, due to a reduced grant that hinders parents in achieving self-sufficiency. Furthermore, according to DPSS, if SB 23 is enacted, the net fiscal impact on the County could be positive as the 2.5 percent share of the CalWORKs grant for all current MFG children could be less than the 100 percent Net County Cost of the GR grant costs for MFG children who qualify under the new GR Policy. DPSS indicates that based on October 2014 data, there were a total of 31,808 CalWORKs MFG cases and 42,849 MFG children.

This office and the Department of Public Social Services support SB 23. Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to support proposals to repeal the CalWORKs Maximum Family Grant rule which prohibits a CalWORKs grant increase for any child born into a family receiving CalWORKs Program aid for ten continuous months prior to the birth of a child, **the Sacramento advocates will support SB 23.**

SB 23 is co-sponsored by the Western Center on Law and Poverty; County Welfare Directors Association; American Civil Liberties Union of California; and supported by Health Access; California Partnership; and the California Immigrant Policy Center, among others. There is no known opposition at this time.

SB 23 is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Human Services Committee on March 24, 2015.

We will continue to keep you advised.

SAH:MR  
OR:ma

c: All Department Heads  
Legislative Strategist  
Local 721  
Coalition of County Unions  
California Contract Cities Association  
Independent Cities Association  
League of California Cities  
City Managers Associations  
Buddy Program Participants